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**General Education Assessment:
Results of the Collegiate
Assessment of Academic
Proficiency (CAAP) Exam**

*Comparative Report of
MHCC Sophomores and Freshman
taking the CAAP Exam
for Assessment of
General Education Outcomes*

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Prepared for:
Mt. Hood Community College

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Executive Summary

The following report offers results from the American College Testing, Inc.'s (ACT) Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) exams. The CAAP was identified by the General Education Assessment Task Force as a cost-effective and relatively burden-free method of assessing academic progress in three outcome areas: (1) Communications, (2) Computation, and (3) Critical Thinking. MHCC started implementing the CAAP in the spring of 2004. The test has been administered twice a year since that time. In the spring, the tests are administered to a sample targeting sophomore students. In the fall, the tests are administered to a sample targeting freshman students. Samples are based on course enrollment.

This report provides analyses for both self-declared (reported on the examination) and the targeted groups. The report has presented two separate methods of analysis: national norms and cross-sectional analysis. The first method is a snapshot that compares how students of self-declared academic standing (freshmen or sophomores) compare to like-students at similar institutions on a national norm. The second method, the CAAP to CAAP cross-sectional analysis, involves comparing targeted students within MHCC. Both self-declared class standing and targeted (based on sampling methodology) are used to assess academic progress. Emphasis has been placed on national norm comparisons (self-declared) because ACT does not recommend making direct comparisons between classes (targeted groups).

Currently, MHCC is using *five different CAAP exams* to assess the three outcome areas. The *Writing Skills*, *Reading*, and *Writing Essay* exams are used to evaluation progress in communications. The *Mathematics* exam is used to evaluate progress in computation. Finally, the *Critical Thinking* exam evaluates progress in critical thinking.

Communications

With regard to the Writing Skills exam, sophomores generally performed better than freshmen. For the 2004 administrations of the Writing Skills test, the scores for self-declared sophomores and freshmen were almost identical. By taking a composite score across all administrations of the exam, sophomore average scores were higher than freshmen scores (regardless of whether or not they were self-declared or targeted); this difference was found to be statistically significant. Compared to national scores, self-declared sophomores at MHCC generally tested slightly lower than their counterparts at other two-year public institutions.

For the Reading exam, sophomores had slightly higher scores. Self-declared sophomores in the 2006 administration of the exam performed slightly lower than self-declared freshmen. Test data are not available for the spring 2005 administration of the Reading test. When looking at the average scores for all years combined, the scores for self-declared sophomores were not significantly different from the scores for freshmen. Based on the targeted groups, the difference was found to be statistically significant. When comparing MHCC self-declared sophomores to their counterparts at other two-year public institutions, the scores were inconsistent. For two years, the scores were higher than the nationally normed scores; for one of the years the Reading test was administered (fall 2005) scores fell below the national score.

The Writing Essay exam is perhaps the most problematic with regard to General Education Assessment. Freshmen consistently outscored sophomores on the essay exam in all cases (both when looking at individual administrations of the exam and looking at how freshmen and sophomores are grouped together). The writing portion of general education assessment needs to be reviewed with scrutiny to determine how this area can be improved or, alternatively, to identify clear reasons for this anomaly. Using aggregate scores across years, the difference between freshmen and sophomores was found to be statistically significant. National scores were much higher than the average score of MHCC self-declared sophomores. However, MHCC has been making steady improvement in this area.

Computation

The Mathematics portion of the survey had mixed results but, generally, sophomores performed better than freshmen. For the self-declared groups, the 2004 administration revealed almost identical scores between sophomores and freshmen. When looking at the data across years, the average scores for the self-declared groups were not statistically significant. Based on the targeted group scores, sophomores received a higher grade than freshmen; the difference on the targeted groups' scores were significantly different. National scores were consistently lower than MHCC

self-declared sophomore scores. Self-declared sophomores seem to be well prepared in the area of mathematical computation.

Critical Thinking

In all cases (across years and grouping methods), sophomores obtained higher average scores than did freshmen. The one exception is the 2004 targeted administrations; freshmen received a higher average score than targeted sophomores. When averaging scores across years, self-declared sophomores received higher scores than did self-declared freshmen; these differences were statistically significant. Although the scores for targeted groups did not have a statistically significant difference, sophomore targeted average scores were slightly higher. Critical thinking scores of MHCC self-declared sophomores are consistently higher than national scores; it would seem MHCC is doing a good job of preparing students in this area.

In general, the CAAP exams indicate that sophomores are achieving academic progress at MHCC. There are several areas that deserve attention. Most critical of these is in the area of Essay Writing. Concerted effort should be made to determine the factors that are influencing the below-standard performance of sophomores. Of lesser concern, the Mathematics, Reading, and Critical Thinking exams reveal smaller differences between freshmen and sophomores. Further investigation into these areas may be warranted.

Introduction

The General Education Assessment Task Force was established in 2002 with the charge of developing revisions of the MHCC General Education Program and implementation of procedures for assessment. For additional information, please see: "Interim Report on Minimum General Education Outcomes: Knowledge-Based Outcomes for MHCC Associate Degrees," September 2004 (http://www.mhcc.edu/campus/campus_info/allabout/research/assessment/main.htm).

The following report offers results from the American College Testing, Inc.'s (ACT) Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) exams. MHCC started implementing the CAAP in the spring of 2004. The test has been administered twice a year since that time. In the spring, the tests are administered to a sample targeting sophomore students. In the fall, the tests are administered to a sample targeting freshman students. For a detailed discussion of the CAAP exams, please visit: <http://www.act.org/caap/index.html>.

The General Education Assessment Task Force has defined expected general and specific outcomes for the following areas:

- Communications (reading, writing, and speech)
- Computation (mathematics)
- Human Relations (social sciences)
- Information Literacy
- Critical Thinking

The task force reviewed various strategies for assessing the five general education outcomes. Several alternatives were rejected as it was determined they were either too costly or required an excessive burden on faculty. The CAAP exams were determined to be relatively cost-effective and provided separate tests related to three of the outcomes:

- Communications – reading, writing essay, writing skills
- Computation – mathematics
- Critical thinking

A total of 100 students are being sampled for each of the five exams per administration of the survey; approximately 500 students per administration.

A key question from the General Education Task Force was how well the CAAP exams aligned with the proposed outcomes they identified. Task force and discipline-specific faculty reviewed copies of the CAAP exams and found them to be in good alignment. The most significant issue is in the area of mathematics. The CAAP exam for mathematics assesses college level – MTH 115 and above – math equations; most MHCC students take MTH 60 and MTH 65; the latter is the minimum required for the AAS Degree.

Students receive results of the examinations, which provides an independent validation of their General Education skills. Students scoring above the national average also receive a certification of achievement from ACT. This certificate could be valuable in applying to transfer institutions and for scholarships; it may also be of value in job applications.

In regard to technology literacy, it should be noted that MHCC received a five-year Title III Grant in October, 2003. The grant program includes funding to support development of specific skill sets that students should have in technology literacy. In 2006, the college piloted the Education Testing Service (ETS) Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Assessment, an online testing program that measures students' ability to define, access, manage, integrate, evaluate, create and communicate information in a technological environment.

Methodology

Sampling

The CAAP exams are administered twice per year. In the spring, the exams target sophomore students; in the fall, the exams target freshmen students. At the fourth week of the term, enrollment data for all courses are extracted from the CX system. A multi-step process is then employed to identify the courses to be used in the CAAP exams. First, courses identified as Lower Division Collegiate (LDC) are selected. Second, courses taught by instructors who participated in the previous administration of the survey are omitted; an instructor will only be asked to participate in the CAAP once per year. Next, student enrollment is examined and the proportion of freshmen and sophomores is calculated. For the purposes of the CAAP exam, freshmen include students with fewer than 15 earned credits; sophomores include students with 45 or more earned credits. Courses are included if the proportion of targeted students (sophomores in spring, freshmen in fall) is greater than 60 percent. The identified courses are randomly ordered and then systematically selected until the cumulative enrollment is greater than 100. Alternative courses are provided by Division; if a course cannot be used, Deans can select a course from their alternative list. Testing times and administration is coordinated with MHCC's testing center and the instructors.

Analysis

Two methods of analysis are presented in this report: (1) Snapshot Comparison (self-declared) and (2) CAAP to CAAP cross-sectional (targeted). The snapshot comparison (self-declared) provides faculty with a point-in-time view of student learning on a group basis. This approach uses the national mean score of like-students (self-declared class standing) to compare to the average score of similar students at the institution. This is a more qualitative approach and allows faculty to decide if student achievement levels are appropriate by providing a national group score for comparison. If it is determined that scores are not appropriate, faculty can then focus on specific curricula in the general education program that may improve students' scores. The snapshot comparison analysis (self-declared) is only appropriate for the identified years and self-declared status (freshman/sophomore). The CAAP to CAAP cross-sectional analysis (targeted) measures the impact of the institution's curriculum in a short period of time.

This approach uses the sampling methodology to measure the effectiveness of programs by looking at the differences between the two groups (freshmen and sophomores). *Although ACT recognizes this as a valid use of the CAAP exam, they recommend caution as it is questionable whether the freshmen and sophomore groups are comparable.* Although data are presented on a year-to-year basis, the combined mean scores (across years) is the more appropriate analysis for this method.

Results

The following tables present the results of the last five administrations of the CAAP exams by class. Two separate methods for identifying classes are presented. The first is based on students' self-declaration. The CAAP exam asks students to indicate their education level. Students that identified themselves as freshmen were coded as freshmen; students indicating they were sophomores or higher were coded as sophomores. The second method for identifying classes is based on the sampling methodology. The CAAP exams target freshmen in the fall and sophomores in the spring. All students taking the exams in the fall are coded as freshmen; all students taking the exams in spring are coded as sophomores.

For the self-declared tables, data are provided to assess both forms of analyses – for a description of cross-sectional and snapshot analysis, please see the methodology section of the report. The table headings and a brief description are outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1: List of Table Headings and Their Definitions

Table Heading	Definition
Year	The year the exam was administered.
Overall #	The total number of students that participated in the identified exam for that year.
Overall Scr	The average (mean) score obtained by all students participating in the identified exam for that year.
Freshmen #	The number of students that identified themselves as freshmen and participated in the identified exam for that year.
Freshmen Scr	The average (mean) score obtained by all self-declared freshmen participating in the identified exam for that year.
Freshmen Index ¹	Provides a comparison of the freshmen score to the local Overall score.
Freshmen NS	The nationally normed score for self-declared freshmen at all two-year public colleges participating in the identified exam for the year identified (and two previous years).
Freshmen Index ²	Provides a comparison of the freshmen score to the national score.
Freshmen NPAB	The percent of total two-year public college self declared freshmen that scored at or below the score obtained by MHCC self-declared freshmen.
Sophomores #	The number of students that identified themselves as sophomores and participated in the identified exam for that year.
Sophomores Scr	The average (mean) score obtained by all self-declared sophomores participating in the identified exam for that year.
Sophomores Index ¹	Provides a comparison of the sophomore score to the local overall score.
Sophomores NS	The nationally normed score for self-declared sophomores at all two-year public colleges participating in the identified exam for the year identified (and two previous years).
Sophomores Index ²	Provides a comparison of the sophomores score to the national score.
Sophomores NPAB	The percent of total two-year public college self declared sophomores that scored at or below the score obtained by MHCC self-declared sophomores.

For purposes of comparison, two index scores have been calculated for each class and year. Indices provide an indication of how close a particular group is to the overall. The index score is calculated by taking the group's score and dividing it by the overall score and multiplying the result by 100. A score of 100 indicates that the group's score was equal to the overall score; a score below 100 indicates that the group performed less well and a score above 100 indicates the group performed better than the overall. It is expected that the sophomore class will have scores over 100 while the freshman class will have scores below 100.

The first index calculates the identified group's score to the overall score for the identified year. Comparing the Freshmen Index¹ score to the Sophomore Index¹ score provides an indication of how well each class did relative to the other; this aids in the CAAP to CAAP cross-sectional analysis (targeted). The second index score – identified as Index² in the tables – compares the group's score to the nationally normed score (self-declared) for that year. This score provides an indication of how well the identified class did relative to a national group of like-students; this index score aids in the snapshot comparison analysis.

For all the CAAP tests (except critical thinking), ACT provides subscores. These subscores provide additional insights into test results; they provide a more detailed look at how students are doing in discreet subcategories of the specific tests. The subscores are also presented in the tables.

Writing Results

Results of the CAAP Writing exam for self-declared class standing are presented in **Table W1a**. Generally, sophomores scored higher than self-declared freshmen. However, the scores were very close as indicated by Index¹. Sophomores did score slightly lower than freshmen in the 2004 administrations. Comparing freshman scores to the national average score produced mixed results; in 2004, freshmen scored higher than the national score for freshmen at two-year public colleges. Comparing MHCC self-declared sophomores to the national score for sophomores at two-year public colleges indicates that local sophomores scored slightly lower. The data indicates that the average MHCC self-declared freshman received a Writing exam score higher than or equal to 63 percent of the 2004 reference group, 42 percent in the 2005 reference group, and 55 percent in the 2006 reference group. The average MHCC self-declared sophomore received a Writing exam score equal to or higher than 50 percent of the 2004 reference group, 43 percent of the 2005 reference group, and 44 percent of the 2006 reference group.

Table W1a: Results of the CAAP Writing Exam by Year and Class – Self-declared

Year	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	100	62.19	21	62.24	100.08	60.7	102.54	63%	79	62.18	99.98	62.4	99.65	50%
2005	139	60.32	55	59.25	98.23	60.7	97.61	42%	82	61.07	101.24	62.3	98.03	43%
2006	94	61.07	11	60.55	99.15	61.0	99.26	55%	83	61.14	100.11	62.2	98.30	44%
Avg	333	61.09	87	60.14	98.44				244	61.45	100.62			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

The scores by targeted tests are presented in **Table W1b**. For the targeted groups, sophomores consistently performed better than their freshmen counterparts. In 2004, the average sophomore targeted Writing exam score was 63.15; the freshman targeted score was 61.53. Sophomores' average score was 1.63 points higher than their freshmen counterparts. In 2005, the average score of sophomores was even higher: 1.96 points.

Table W1b: Results of the CAAP Writing Exam by Year and Class - Targeted

Writing Exam	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Score	# Tested	Score	Index	# Tested	Score	Index
2004	100	62.19	59	61.53	98.94	41	63.15	101.54
2005	139	60.32	82	59.51	98.66	57	61.47	101.91
2006	94	61.07			0.00	94	61.07	100.00
Average Score	333	61.09	141	60.35	98.79	192	61.64	100.90

The subscores for the Writing Skills test are for *Usage/Mechanics* and *Rhetoric*. **Table W2a** presents the average subscores for Usage/Mechanics by self-declared class standing. Self-declared sophomore scores were better than their freshman counterparts; the 2004 administration of the writing skills test is an exception; self-declared fresh-

men scored slightly higher than self-declared sophomores with regard to Usage/Mechanics in this administration. Compared to the national average scores for self-declared freshmen and self-declared sophomores, MHCC scores were inconsistent. In 2004, self-declared freshmen scored much higher than the national average. For the other two years, self-declared freshmen scored much lower. Sophomores consistently scored below the national average for the Usage/Mechanics portion of the exam. However, they performed much worse than the national average in the 2005 administration of the exam than they did before or after. The average MHCC self-declared freshman received a score higher than or equal to 64 percent of the 2004 reference group, 50 percent of the 2005 reference group, and 49 percent of the 2006 reference group. Across all three years, the average MHCC self-declared sophomore received a score higher or equal to over 50 percent of their respective reference group.

Table W2a: Results of the CAAP Writing Exam Subcategory Usage/Mechanics by Year and Class – Self-declared

Year	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	100	16.22	21	16.43	101.29	15.5	106.00	64%	79	16.16	99.63	16.2	99.75	53%
2005	139	15.13	55	14.60	96.50	15.5	94.19	50%	82	15.52	102.58	16.2	95.80	53%
2006	94	15.62	11	15.09	96.61	15.6	96.73	49%	83	15.69	100.45	16.1	97.45	55%
Avg	333	15.59	87	15.10	96.86				244	15.79	101.28			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

Table W2b presents the results of the Usage/Mechanics scores by targeted class standing. Average scores for the sophomore targeted group were much higher than scores for the freshman targeted group.

Table W2b: Results of the CAAP Writing Exam Subcategory Usage/Mechanics by Year and Class – Targeted

Usage / Mechanics	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Score	# Tested	Score	Index	# Tested	Score	Index
2004	100	16.22	59	15.85	97.72	41	16.76	103.33
2005	139	15.13	82	14.73	97.36	57	15.70	103.77
2006	94	15.62			0.00	94	15.62	100.00
Average Score	333	15.59	141	15.20	97.50	192	15.89	101.92

Table W3a presents average subscores for Rhetoric by self-declared class standing. In all cases, MHCC sophomores had higher average subscores in Rhetoric than their freshmen counterparts. For self-declared freshmen, the scores were higher than the national mean score for both the 2004 and 2006 administrations; scores were lower than the national average in the 2005 administrations. For self-declared sophomores, scores have been consistently below the national average of sophomores at two-year public colleges. Additionally, the spread has between the national score and the local score has been increasing. The average MHCC self-declared freshman scored even to or higher than 52 percent of the reference group in 2004, 53 percent in 2005, and 63 percent in 2006. The MHCC self-declared sophomores were consistent across all years; the average self-declared sophomore scored at or above about 53 percent of the national reference group scores.

Table W3a: Results of the CAAP Writing Exam Subcategory Rhetoric by Year and Class – Self-declared

Year	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	100	16.05	21	15.95	99.38	15.4	103.57	52%	79	16.08	100.19	16.3	98.65	52%
2005	139	15.35	55	14.78	96.29	15.3	96.60	53%	82	15.79	102.87	16.2	97.47	53%
2006	94	15.57	11	15.55	99.87	15.5	100.32	63%	83	15.58	100.06	16.2	96.17	53%
Avg	333	15.62	87	15.16	97.06				244	15.80	101.15			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

Results of the Rhetoric scores by targeted class standing are presented in **Table W3b**. Sophomores consistently scored better than their freshmen counterparts in the Rhetoric section of the exam.

Table W3b: Results of the CAAP Writing Exam Subcategory Rhetoric by Year and Class – Targeted

Rhetoric	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomores Targeted		
	# Tested	Scr	# Tested	Scr	Index	# Tested	Scr	Index
2004	100	16.05	59	15.78	98.32	41	16.44	102.43
2005	139	15.35	82	14.91	97.13	57	15.98	104.10
2006	94	15.57			0.00	94	15.57	100.00
Average Score	333	15.62	141	15.28	97.82	192	15.88	101.66

Mathematics Results

Mathematics scores for self-declared class standing are presented in **Table M1a**. Self-declared sophomores performed slightly better than self-declared freshmen (except for the 2004 administration where scores were almost equal). With regard to performance relative to the national mean scores for freshmen at two-year public institutions, freshmen scored higher than the national mean in 2004 and lower than the nation mean in 2005 and 2006. Additionally the local mean score for self-declared freshmen has further away from the national mean score. For self-declared sophomores, the mathematics scores have been higher than the national mean scores. The average MHCC self-declared freshman scored higher than or equal to 75 percent of the reference group in 2004, 54 percent of the reference group in 2005, and 43 percent in 2006. The average self-declared sophomore scored higher than 85 percent of the reference group in 2004, 76 percent in 2005, and 66 percent in 2006, respectively.

Table M1a: Results of the CAAP Mathematics Exam by Year and Class – Self-declared

Year	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	100	58.71	24	58.79	100.14	57.1	102.96	75%	74	58.68	99.95	56.1	104.60	85%
2005	175	57.35	102	57.09	99.55	57.1	99.98	54%	73	57.71	100.63	56.1	102.87	76%
2006	92	56.95	15	55.87	98.10	57.0	98.02	43%	75	57.28	100.58	56.1	102.10	66%
Avg	367	57.62	141	57.25	99.36				222	57.89	100.47			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

Table M1b presents the results of the mathematics scores by targeted class standing. Sophomore targeted exam results show much higher average scores than the freshman targeted average scores. The freshmen targeted group's mean score was 1.22 points lower than the overall score in 2004 and 1.64 points lower than the overall score in 2005.

Table M1b: Results of the CAAP Mathematics Exam by Year and Class – Targeted

Mathematics	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Scr	# Tested	Scr	Index	# Tested	Scr	Index
2004	100	58.71	59	57.49	97.92	41	60.46	102.98
2005	175	57.35	84	55.71	97.14	91	58.86	102.63
2006	92	56.95			0.00	92	56.95	100.00
Average Score	367	57.62	143	56.45	97.97	224	58.37	101.30

Subscores in the CAAP Mathematics Exam are for *Basic Algebra* and *College Algebra*. Results of the subscores for Basic Algebra by self-declared class standing are presented in **Table M2a**. Self-declared sophomores scored higher than self-declared freshman on the subcategory Basic Algebra in the 2005 and 2006 administrations of the CAAP Mathematics exam. Sophomore’s scores were virtually the same as freshmen scores in the 2004 administrations. Regarding comparisons of self-declared freshmen to the national mean score for self-declared freshmen at two-year public colleges, local freshmen achieved a much higher mean score than the national score in 2004. In both 2005 and 2006, administrations of the match exam, self-declared freshmen scored much lower than the national mean scores. Sophomores scored extremely well on the Basic Algebra portion of the CAAP Mathematics exam. The self-declared sophomores received an average score of 16.05 in 2004, while the national average for that year was 14.2; a difference of 1.85 points. In the 2006 administration of the exam, the difference was still substantial; 1.13 points higher than the national mean score.

Table M2a: Results of the CAAP Mathematics Exam Subscores Basic Algebra by Year and Class – Self-declared

Year	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	100	16.04	24	15.92	99.25	14.8	107.57	76%	74	16.05	100.06	14.2	113.03	85%
2005	175	14.74	102	14.46	98.10	14.8	97.70	46%	73	15.12	102.58	14.2	106.48	70%
2006	92	15.10	15	14.27	94.50	14.7	97.07	46%	75	15.33	101.52	14.2	107.96	61%
Avg	367	15.18	141	14.69	96.77				222	15.50	102.11			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

The basic algebra subscores by targeted class standing are presented in **Table M2b**. Interestingly, for the targeted tests, sophomore targeted average scores were higher than the freshman targeted test scores.

Table M2b: Results of the CAAP Mathematics Exam Subscores Basic Algebra by Year and Class – Targeted

Basic Algebra	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Scr	# Tested	Scr	Index	# Tested	Scr	Index
2004	100	16.04	59	15.37	95.82	41	17.00	105.99
2005	175	14.74	84	13.64	92.54	91	15.75	106.85
2006	92	15.10			0.00	92	15.10	100.00
Average Score	367	15.18	143	14.36	94.60	224	15.71	103.49

For the college level algebra subscores of the Mathematics exam, self-declared freshman generally scored higher than their self-declared sophomore counterparts; overall, the average score for self-declared freshmen was 14.33; for sophomores the average scores was 14.09. Scores by targeted class were much closer to expected; sophomore targeted average scores for college algebra were 14.35 while freshman targeted average scores were 13.88.

Table M3a: Results of the CAAP Mathematics Exam Subscores College Algebra by Year and Class – Self-declared

Year	Overall Scores		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	100	14.44	24	14.58	100.97	14.6	98.84	69%	74	14.41	99.79	14.1	102.20	66%
2005	175	14.28	102	14.43	101.05	14.6	98.84	56%	73	14.07	98.53	14.0	100.50	66%
2006	92	13.65	15	13.27	97.22	14.5	91.52	42%	75	13.80	101.10	14.0	98.57	67%
Avg	367	14.17	141	14.33	101.13				222	14.09	99.44			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

Results of the CAAP Mathematics exam college algebra subscores are presented in **Table M3b**. The data clearly demonstrate that the sophomore targeted group consistently performed better than their freshmen counterparts.

Table M3b: Results of the CAAP Mathematics Exam Subscores College Algebra by Year and Class - Targeted

College Algebra	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Scr	# Tested	Scr	Index	# Tested	Scr	Index
2004	100	14.44	59	13.85	95.91	41	15.29	105.89
2005	175	14.28	84	13.90	97.34	91	14.63	102.45
2006	92	13.65			0.00	92	13.65	100.00
Average Score	367	14.17	143	13.88	97.95	224	14.35	101.27

Reading Results

Results of the CAAP Reading exam are presented in **Table R1**. The average scores across years indicate little difference between self-declared freshmen and sophomores. Self-declared sophomores scored lower than self-declared freshmen in the most recent administration of the reading exam. The average MHCC self-declared freshman scored even with or higher than 68 percent of the 2004 reference group, 49 percent of their 2005 reference group, and 73 percent of their 2006 reference group. The average MHCC self-declared sophomore scored even with or higher than 64 percent of the 2004 reference group, 38 percent of the 2005 reference group, and 57 percent of the 2006 reference group, respectively.

Table R1a: Results of the CAAP Reading Exam by Year and Class – Self-declared

Reading	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	83	61.34	38	60.55	98.71	59.2	102.28	68%	44	62.18	101.37	60.5	102.87	64%
2005	59	57.66	42	57.57	99.84	59.3	97.08	49%	17	57.88	100.38	60.5	95.67	38%
2006	99	61.08	16	62.06	101.60	59.3	104.65	73%	83	60.89	99.69	60.6	100.48	57%
Avg	241	60.33	96	59.50	98.62				144	60.93	100.99			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

Results of the CAAP Reading exam by targeted class standing are presented in **Table R1b**. Sophomore targeted scores were not available for the 2005 administration of the CAAP Reading exam. It is unknown why these scores are not available.

Table R1b: Results of the CAAP Reading Exam by Year and Class - Targeted

Reading	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Scr	# Tested	Scr	Index	# Tested	Scr	Index
2004	83	61.34	58	61.07	99.56	25	61.96	101.01
2005	59	57.66	59	57.66	100.00			0.00
2006	99	61.08			0.00	99	61.08	100.00
Average Score	241	60.33	117	59.35	98.38	124	61.26	101.54

Two subscores are provided for the CAAP Reading exam: *Arts/Literature* and *Social Sciences*. Results of the Arts/Literature subscores are presented in **Table R2**. For the self-declared groups, the sophomores scored higher than their freshmen counterparts except for the 2006 spring administration. The average MHCC self-declared freshmen scored even with or higher than 67 percent of all self-declared freshmen at two-year public institutions in 2004, 55 percent of the 2005 reference group, and 66 percent of the 2006 reference group, respectively. The average MHCC self-declared sophomore scored even with or higher than 60 percent of their reference group in 2004, 46 percent of the 2005 reference group, and 59 percent of the 2006 reference group, respectively.

Table R2a: Results of the CAAP Reading Exam Subscore Arts/Literature by Year and Class – Self-declared

Year	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	83	15.08	38	14.76	97.88	14.4	102.50	67%	44	15.48	102.65	14.9	103.89	60%
2005	59	13.95	42	13.79	98.85	14.4	95.76	55%	17	14.35	102.87	14.9	96.31	46%
2006	99	14.82	16	15.19	102.50	14.4	105.49	66%	83	14.75	99.53	14.9	98.99	59%
Avg	241	14.70	96	14.41	98.03				144	14.92	101.50			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

Results of the Arts/Literature subscores by targeted class standing are presented in **Table R2b**. For the targeted groups, sophomores scored higher where data is available.

Table R2b: Results of the CAAP Reading Exam Subscore Arts/Literature by Year and Class – Targeted

Arts / Literature	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Score	# Tested	Score	Index	# Tested	Score	Index
2004	83	15.08	58	15.02	99.60	25	15.24	101.06
2005	59	13.95	59	13.95	100.00			0.00
2006	99	14.82			0.00	99	14.82	100.00
Average Score	241	14.70	117	14.48	98.50	124	14.90	101.36

Social Science subscores for the CAAP Reading exam are presented in **Table R3**. Although the overall average scores indicate that self-declared sophomores scored higher than self-declared freshman, the scores by year are lower (except for the 2004 administrations). The average score based on targeted groups indicate that the sophomore targeted group scored much higher than the freshmen targeted group. The average MHCC self-declared freshmen

scored even with or higher than 74 percent of the 2004 reference group, 49 percent of the 2005 reference group, and 81 percent higher than the 2006 reference group. The average MHCC self-declared sophomore scored even with or higher than 74 percent of their 2004 reference group, 30 percent of their 2005 reference group, and 63 percent of their 2006 reference group.

Table R3a: Results of the CAAP Reading Exam Subscore Social Science by Year and Class – Self Declared

Year	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	83	16.11	38	15.71	97.52	14.8	106.15	74%	44	16.50	102.42	15.5	106.45	74%
2005	59	14.19	42	14.24	100.35	14.8	14.24	49%	17	14.06	99.08	15.5	90.71	39%
2006	99	16.12	16	16.56	102.73	14.9	111.14	81%	83	16.04	99.50	15.5	103.48	63%
Avg	241	15.64	96	15.21	97.25				144	15.94	101.92			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

Results of the CAAP Reading exam Social Science subsection by targeted class are present in **Table R3b**.

Table R3b: Results of the CAAP Reading Exam Subscore Social Science by Year and Class – Targeted

Social Science	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Scr	# Tested	Scr	Index	# Tested	Scr	Index
2004	83	16.11	58	16.00	99.32	25	16.36	101.55
2005	59	14.19	59	14.19	100.00			0.00
2006	99	16.12			0.00	99	16.12	100.00
Average Score	241	15.64	117	15.09	96.48	124	16.17	103.39

Critical Thinking Results

Results of the Critical Thinking CAAP exam by self-declared class standing are presented in **Table CT1**. In all cases, self-declared sophomores scored higher than self-declared freshmen. However, scores do not appear to be dramatically different. Compared to the national scores, MHCC self-declared freshmen scored higher with the exception of the 2006 administration. Self-declared sophomores at MHCC scored much higher than their national reference group on the Critical Thinking exam across all years. The average MHCC self-declared freshman scored higher than or equal two 69 percent of the 2004 reference group, 67 percent of the 2005 reference group, and 53 percent of the 2006 reference group. The average MHCC self-declared sophomore scored higher than or even with 61 percent of the 2004 reference group, 54 percent of the 2005 reference group, and 72 percent of the 2006 reference group, respectively.

Table CT1a: Results of the CAAP Critical Thinking by Year and Class – Self-declared

Year	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	132	61.92	17	61.00	98.51	59.0	103.39	69%	115	62.05	100.21	60.5	102.56	61%
2005	113	61.34	46	61.09	99.59	59.3	103.02	67%	66	61.42	100.13	60.8	101.12	54%
2006	95	63.34	13	58.69	92.66	59.4	98.80	53%	82	64.07	101.15	60.9	105.21	72%
Avg	340	62.12	76	60.66	97.65				263	62.52	100.64			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

Results of the CAAP Critical Thinking Exam by targeted class standing are presented in **Table CT1b**. The targeted group scores were mixed with the freshmen targeted group scoring higher than the sophomore targeted group in 2004; in 2005 the sophomore targeted group scored higher.

Table CT1b: Results of the CAAP Critical Thinking Exam by Year and Class – Targeted

Critical Thinking	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Scr	# Tested	Scr	Index	# Tested	Scr	Index
2004	132	61.92	60	62.08	100.26	72	61.78	99.77
2005	113	61.34	93	61.12	99.64	20	62.35	101.65
2006	95	63.34			0.00	95	63.34	100.00
Average Score	340	62.12	153	61.50	99.00	187	62.63	100.82

Essay Results

Results of the CAAP Essay exam are presented in **Table E1a**. Unfortunately, the essay results were not positive. In all cases, freshman scored substantially higher than their sophomore counterparts. The overall average score for self-declared sophomores was 2.48; the overall average score for self-declared freshmen was 2.93. Compared to national scores both self-declared freshmen and sophomores seem to have been making progress. Index² scores have consistently risen over the three years of administrations of the exams; for the 2006 administrations, freshmen actually exceeding the national score by two-tenths. The trend is also evident when comparing the students' score to the national percentiles. The average MHCC self-declared freshmen scored even to or better than 26 percent of the 2004 reference group, 60 percent of the 2005 reference group, and 75 percent of the 2006 reference group. The average MHCC self-declared sophomore scored even to or better than 12 percent of the 2004 reference group, 24 percent of the 2005 reference group, and 67 percent of the 2006 reference group, respectively.

Table E1a: Results of the CAAP Essay by Year and Class – Self-declared

Year	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	124	2.48	65	2.75	110.89	3.1	88.71	26%	59	2.17	87.50	3.1	70.00	12%
2005	83	2.92	60	3.08	105.48	3.1	99.35	60%	23	2.48	84.93	3.0	82.67	24%
2006	64	2.88	10	3.20	111.11	3.0	106.67	75%	53	2.83	98.26	2.9	97.59	67%
Avg	271	2.70	135	2.93	108.52				135	2.48	91.85			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

Results of the CAAP Essay exam by targeted class standing are presented in **Table E1b**. The average score for the sophomore targeted group was 2.42; the average score for freshmen targeted group was 2.97. As with the reading test, data are missing for the sophomore targeted essay test in 2005. Either these data were not collected (the Essay exam was not administered in 2005) or the data was not submitted for analysis.

Table E1b: Results of the CAAP Essay Exam by Year and Class – Targeted

Essay	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Scr	# Tested	Scr	Index	# Tested	Scr	Index
2004	124	2.48	58	3.05	122.98	66	1.97	79.44
2005	83	2.92	83	2.92	100.00			0.00
2006	64	2.88			0.00	64	2.88	100.00
Average Score	271	2.70	141	2.97	110.00	130	2.42	89.63

For the CAAP Essay exam, subscores were provided for *Essay I* and *Essay II*. Subscores for *Essay I* by self-declared class standing are presented in **Table E2a**. Again, in all cases, self-declared sophomores scored lower than self-declared freshmen. Compared to the national score in the given years, MHCC self-declared freshmen did very well; they scored .15 higher in 2005 administrations and .3 higher in 2006. Self-declared MHCC sophomores did score higher than their national reference group in 2006 by .04 points.

Table E2a: Results of the CAAP Essay Exam Subscore Essay I by Year and Class – Self-declared

Year	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	124	2.50	65	2.80	112.00	3.1	90.32	66%	59	2.17	86.80	3.1	70.00	12%
2005	83	3.10	60	3.25	104.84	3.1	104.84	80%	23	2.70	87.10	3.0	90.00	23%
2006	64	3.06	10	3.30	107.84	3.0	110.00	83%	53	3.04	99.35	3.0	101.33	73%
Avg	271	2.82	135	3.04	107.80				135	2.60	92.20			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

Table E2b presents the results of the CAAP Essay exam subscore *Essay I* by targeted class standing. Little information can be obtained as the 2005 sophomore administration data was not collected.

Table E2b: Results of the CAAP Essay Exam Subscore Essay I by Year and Class

Essay I	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Score	# Tested	Score	Index	# Tested	Score	Index
2004	124	2.50	58	3.14	125.60	66	1.94	77.60
2005	83	3.10	83	3.10	100.00			0.00
2006	64	3.06			0.00	64	3.06	100.00
Average Score	271	2.82	141	3.11	110.28	130	2.49	88.30

Results of the CAAP Essay exam subscores for *Essay II* are present in **Table E3**. Again, sophomore scores were substantially lower than freshmen scores. For the subscore *Essay II*, self-declared MHCC freshmen showed improvement relative to the national score reference group; they actually scored higher than the national score in the 2006 administration. MHCC self-declared sophomores have also shown improvement over time but not as substantial as their freshmen counterparts.

Table E3a: Results of the CAAP Essay Exam Subscore Essay II by Year and Class – Self-declared

Year	Overall Score		Freshman Self-declared						Sophomores Self-declared					
	#	Scr	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB	#	Scr	Index ¹	NS	Index ²	NPAB
2004	124	2.53	65	2.82	111.46	3.1	90.97	66%	59	2.22	87.75	3.1	71.61	12%
2005	83	2.75	60	2.92	106.18	3.1	94.19	71%	23	2.30	83.64	3.0	76.67	24%
2006	64	2.81	10	3.20	113.88	2.9	110.34	76%	53	2.75	97.86	2.9	94.82	77%
Avg	271	2.66	135	2.89	108.65				135	2.44	91.73			

¹ Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the overall local score.

² Index provides a comparison of the identified group to the National (Mean) Score of like-students at two-year public colleges.

Table E3b presents the results of the CAAP Essay subscores for targeted class standing. Again, little information can be discerned from this table as the 2005 sophomore-targeted exams were not administered or not submitted for processing.

Table E3: Results of the CAAP Essay Exam Subscore Essay II by Year and Class

Essay II	Overall Score		Freshman Targeted			Sophomore Targeted		
	# Tested	Score	# Tested	Score	Index	# Tested	Score	Index
2004	124	2.53	58	3.12	123.32	66	2.02	79.84
2005	83	2.75	83	2.75	100.00			0.00
2006	64	2.81			0.00	64	2.81	100.00
Average Score	271	2.66	141	2.90	109.02	130	2.41	90.60

Overall Results

The overall results comparing freshman exam scores to sophomore exam scores are presented in **Tables O1** and **O2**. **Table O1** presents the data based on self-declared status while **Table O2** presents the scores based on the targeted class. The tables provide scores and subscores for specific areas addressed in each exam. The scores combine all administrations of the CAAP in order to provide substantial sample sizes. Additionally, indices have been calculated for each score. These indices provide an indication of how close the identified group's score was to the overall. The index is calculated by dividing the overall score into the group's score and multiplying the result by 100. An index of 100 indicates that the group scored the same as the overall score; an index over 100 indicates the group scored higher than the overall; an index below 100 indicates the group scored below the overall average score. It is expected that all sophomore indices would be above 100 while all freshman indices would fall below 100.

Although ACT does not recommend making direct comparisons between classes, a specific objective of the General Education Assessment Task Force was to assess if sophomores perform better on the exams than their freshmen counterparts. **Tables O1** and **O2** provide results of independent samples t-tests for each of the exams. For the self-declared groups (see **Table O1**), statistically significant differences were found for three of the exams: (1) Writing Skills ($t=-2.2$, $p=.027$), (2) Critical Thinking ($t=-2.4$, $p=.015$), and (3) Writing Essay ($t=3.5$, $p=.001$). For the Writing Skills and Critical Thinking exams, self-declared sophomores had an average score higher than self-declared freshmen; for the Writing Essay exam, self-declared sophomores received a lower average score than their self-declared freshmen counterparts. No statistically significant differences were found between self-declared freshmen and self-declared sophomores for Mathematics or Reading.

The targeted class groups (see Table O2) resulted in statistically significant differences in four of the exams: (1) Writing Skills ($t=-2.4$, $p=.016$), (2) Mathematics ($t=-4.6$, $p=.000$), (3) Reading ($t=-2.6$, $p=.011$), and (4) Writing Essay ($t=4.4$, $p=.000$). As with the self-declared groups, the sophomore targeted average test scores were higher than the freshmen targeted scores except for the Writing Essay which had lower scores for sophomores than freshmen. No statistically significant differences were found between the targeted groups for the Critical Thinking exam.

Motivation scores are also reported in the tables. The CAAP exams ask respondents to indicate how motivated they were to take the test. Students are provided a scale ranging from 1="Tried my best" to 4="Gave no effort" at the end of the exam. One hypothesis was that sophomores (particularly on tests where they obtained lower average scores than freshmen) were less motivated to take the test. For the self-declared groups, this does not appear to be the case. For Mathematics, motivation scores were higher for sophomores than freshmen; for Reading, motivation scores were higher for freshmen. For the targeted groups, there was virtually no difference in the motivation scores between the two groups on the Critical Thinking exam. Unfortunately, the motivation question is not asked of the Essay participants.

Table O1: Results of CAAP Exams by Self-declared Class (All Years Combined)

Test	Subscores	Overall	Self-declared Freshman		Self-declared Sophomore		T. Sig	Motivation Scores ¹	
			Avg Scr	Index ²	Avg Scr	Index ²		Freshman	Sophomore
Writing Skills	Overall	61.09	60.14	98.44	61.45	100.59	-2.2, .027	1.56	1.70
	Usage/Mechanics	15.50	15.01	96.84	15.71	101.35			
	Rhetoric	15.55	15.11	97.17	15.73	101.16			
Mathematics	Overall	57.62	57.25	99.36	57.89	100.47	-1.5, .138	1.83	1.74
	Algebra - Basic	15.18	14.69	96.77	15.50	102.11			
	Algebra - College	14.17	14.33	101.13	14.09	99.44			
Reading	Overall	60.33	59.50	98.62	60.93	100.99	-1.9, .062	1.75	1.90
	Arts / Literature	14.70	14.41	98.03	14.92	101.50			
	Social Studies/Sciences	15.64	15.21	97.25	15.94	101.92			
Critical Thinking	Overall	62.12	60.66	97.65	62.52	100.64	-2.4, .015	1.60	1.50
	N/A								
	N/A								
Writing Essay Composite	Overall	2.70	2.93	108.52	2.45	90.74	3.5, .001		
	Writing - Essay I	2.82	3.04	107.80	2.60	92.20			
	Writing - Essay II	2.66	2.89	108.65	2.44	91.73			

¹Motivation Scores are an average of student scores and are based on a four point scale: 1="Tried My Best" 2="Gave Moderate Effort" 3="Gave Little Effort" and 4="Gave No Effort"

²Index scores provide a comparison of the group to the overall; the scores are calculated by taking the identified group's score and dividing it by the overall score and multiplying the result by 100. A score of 100 would indicate that both freshman and sophomores scored the same on this test.

Table O2: Results of CAAP Exams by Targeted Class (All Years Combined)

Test	Subscores	Overall	Self-declared Freshman		Self-declared Sophomore		T. Sig	Motivation Scores ³	
			Avg Scr	Index ⁴	Avg Scr	Index ⁴		Freshman	Sophomore
Writing Skills	Overall	61.09	60.35	98.79	61.64	100.90	-2.4, .016	1.62	1.70
	Usage/Mechanics	15.59	15.20	97.50	15.89	101.66			
	Rhetoric	15.62	15.28	97.82	15.88	101.66			
Mathematics	Overall	57.62	56.45	97.97	58.37	101.30	-4.6, .000	1.80	1.76
	Algebra - Basic	15.18	14.36	94.60	15.71	103.49			
	Algebra - College	14.17	13.88	97.95	14.35	101.27			
Reading	Overall	60.33	59.35	98.38	61.26	101.54	-2.6, .011	1.87	1.81
	Arts / Literature	14.70	14.48	98.50	14.90	101.36			
	Social Studies/Sciences	15.64	15.09	96.48	16.17	103.39			
Critical Thinking	Overall	62.12	61.50	99.00	62.63	100.82	-1.7, .078	1.54	1.50
	N/A								
	N/A								
Writing Essay Composite	Overall	2.70	2.97	110.00	2.42	89.63	4.4, .000		
	Writing - Essay I	2.82	3.11	110.28	2.49	88.30			
	Writing - Essay II	2.66	2.90	109.02	2.41	90.60			

³Motivation Scores are an average of student scores and are based on a four point scale: 1="Tried My Best" 2="Gave Moderate Effort" 3="Gave Little Effort" and 4="Gave No Effort"

⁴Index scores provide a comparison of the group to the overall; the scores are calculated by taking the identified group's score and dividing it by the overall score and multiplying the result by 100. A score of 100 would indicate that both freshman and sophomores scored the same on this test.

Figure O1 presents the Index scores for the five areas addressed by the CAAP exams by Self-declared Class. In all but one case, self-declared sophomores' tests resulted in higher scores than the self-declared freshmen tests. In the writing essay exam, the self-declared freshman appeared to score better than their sophomore targeted counterparts.

Figure O1: Index Scores by Exam Type for Self-declared Classes

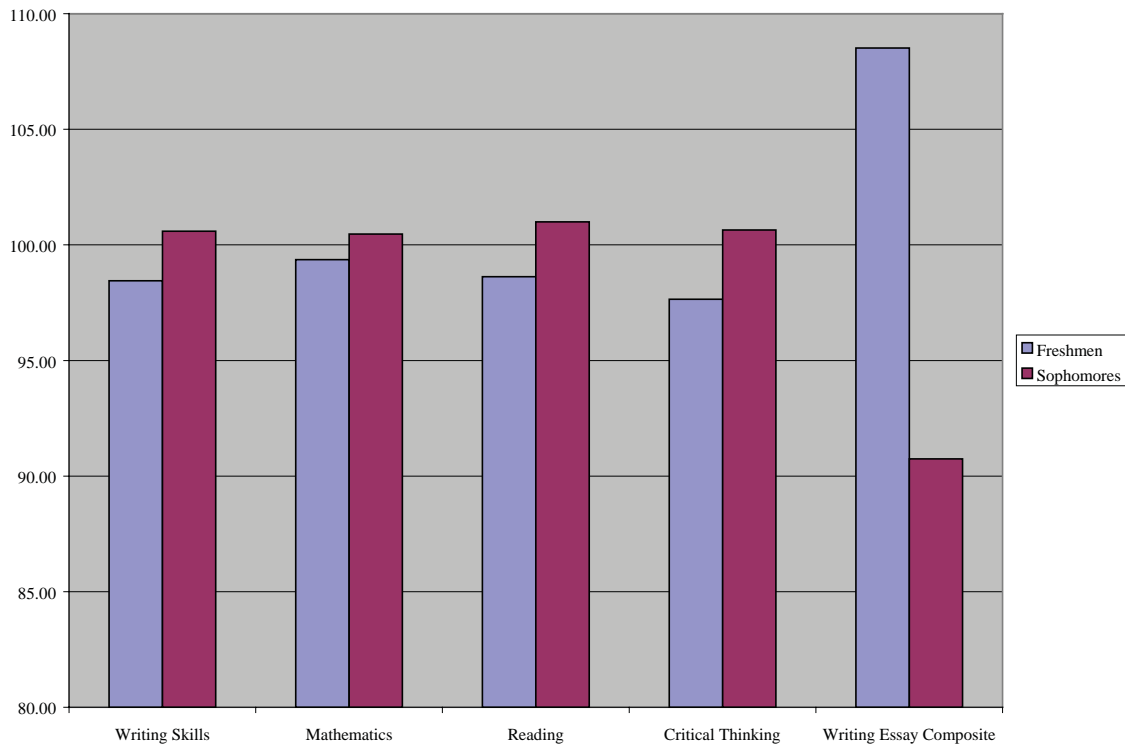
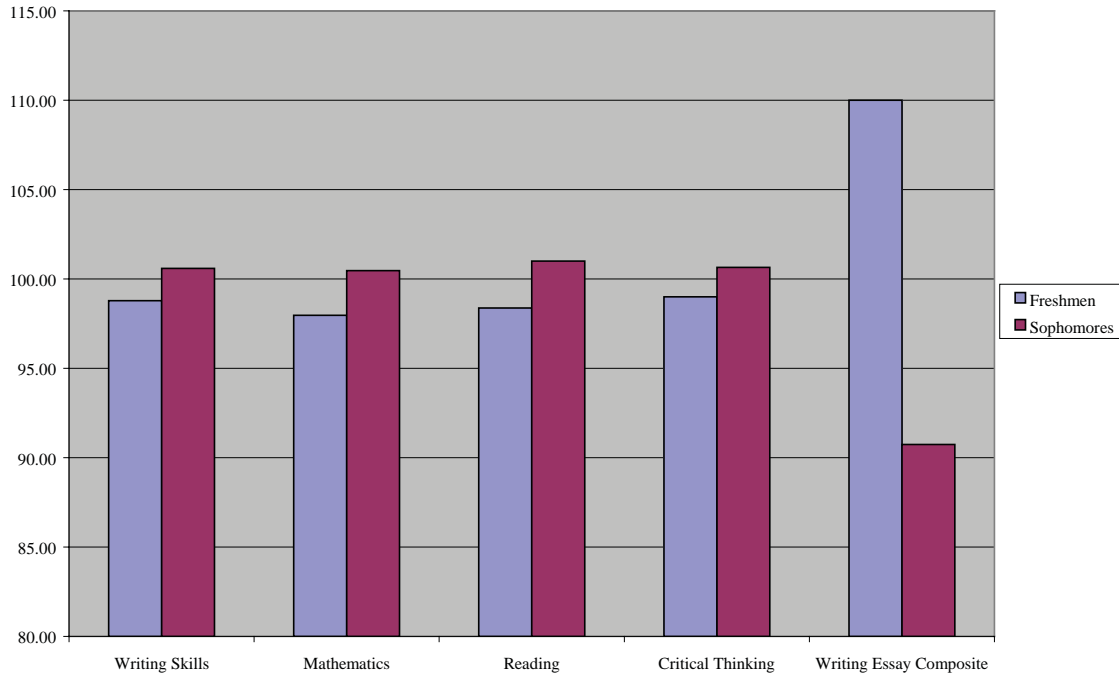


Figure O2 presents the index scores for each test by the Targeted Class. As with the self-declared grouping, indices for sophomore targeted tests were higher than freshmen targeted tests. The exception is the Essay exam were freshmen consistently scored higher than their sophomore counterparts.

Figure O2: Index Scores by Exam Type for Targeted Classes



Discussion

This report has assessed results of the ACT Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) exams for five areas: (1) Writing Skills, (2) Mathematics, (3) Reading, (4) Critical Thinking, and (5) Writing Essay. The report has presented two separate methods of analysis. The first method is a snapshot that compares how students of self-declared academic standing (freshmen or sophomores) compare to like-students at similar institutions. The second method – the CAAP to CAAP cross-sectional analysis (targeted)– involves comparing students within MHCC. Both self-declared class standing and targeted (based on sampling methodology) are used to assess academic progress.

Snapshot Analysis (self-declared)

The snapshot analysis (self-declared) – comparing students at MHCC to nationally normed scores of like-students at other public two-year institutions – revealed that MHCC students are doing very well in Mathematics and Critical Thinking. Overall Mathematics scores by self-declared sophomores were consistently higher than national scores for all years the exam was administered. Likewise, the Critical Thinking exam scores were higher than the scores reported for all self-declared sophomores at two-year institutions. MHCC is doing very well in these two areas. For the self-declared sophomores, the Reading exam was inconsistent. For two of the years tested, the scores were above the national average. For one of the years tested (2005), the scores were substantially below the national average. The two Writing tests (writing skills and writing essay), seem to be the most problematic for MHCC sophomores. For the Writing Skills test, self-declared sophomores consistently scored below the national average across all years tested. The Writing Essay exam was the most problematic for the college. Self-declared sophomores scored much lower than their counterparts at other two-year public institutions. Although self-declared sophomores have consistently scored below the national average, the average MHCC score for this group has steadily increased and shown marked improvement; the scores have – for this last administration – almost equaled the national average.

CAAP to CAAP Cross-sectional Analysis (targeted)

In general, the CAAP exams reflect academic progress being made by MHCC students. Regardless of looking at students self-declaring their class standing or at results of targeted administrations, sophomores received higher average scores than their freshmen counterparts. The one exception is the Writing Essay exam. The Writing Essay is problematic and deserves careful review. Faculty resistance to the administration of the exams, student motivation, and the exam itself may all be factors resulting in the lower test scores of sophomores. It is interesting to note that the nationally normed data provided by ACT for the 2006-2007 school year, indicates that self-declared freshmen (attending two-year public colleges) have a higher mean score on the composite essay than their sophomore counterparts.

Although scores are higher for sophomores, no statistically significant differences were found for three of the tests. Both the Mathematics and Reading exams produced scores that were not significantly different for self-declared classes. The Critical Thinking exam produced scores that were not statistically different based on the targeted classes. These three tests may deserve additional examination as well.

(Footnotes)

- 1 Motivation Scores are an average of student scores and are based on a four point scale: 1="Tried My Best" 2="Gave Moderate Effort" 3="Gave Little Effort" and 4="Gave No Effort"
- 2 Index scores provide a comparison of the group to the overall; the scores are calculated by taking the identified group's score and dividing it by the overall score and multiplying the result by 100. A score of 100 would indicate that both freshman and sophomores scored the same on this test.
- 3 Motivation Scores are an average of student scores and are based on a four point scale: 1="Tried My Best" 2="Gave Moderate Effort" 3="Gave Little Effort" and 4="Gave No Effort"
- 4 Index scores provide a comparison of the group to the overall; the scores are calculated by taking the identified group's score and dividing it by the overall score and multiplying the result by 100. A score of 100 would indicate that both freshman and sophomores scored the same on this test.